

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claims 1-51 (Cancelled)

52. (New) A skin cosmetic composition comprising:

hydrogel particles dispersed in an aqueous medium, wherein each of said hydrogel particles comprises a non-crosslinked hydrogel having an oil component dispersed therein, wherein said hydrogel particles have a CV value for particle diameter of 5 or less.

53. (New) The skin cosmetic composition of claim 52, wherein said aqueous medium has a viscosity of 300 to 5000mPa•s at 25° C and a specific gravity of 0.7 to 2.0.

54. (New) The skin cosmetic composition of claim 52, wherein said hydrogel particles are prepared by a process comprising:

providing an emulsion or dispersion of components comprising a non-crosslinked hydrogel-forming polymer, the oil component and water; and
discharging said emulsion or dispersion through an orifice into a cooling oil under conditions sufficient to provide droplets, which are cooled in said cooling oil after formation.

55. (New) The skin cosmetic composition of claim 52, wherein said cosmetic composition comprises visibly recognizable particles having an average particle diameter of 0.1 to 5 mm and being dispersed in the aqueous medium.

56. (New) The skin cosmetic composition of claim 54, wherein said cosmetic composition comprises visibly recognizable particles having an average particle diameter of 0.1 to 5 mm and being dispersed in the aqueous medium.

57. (New) The skin cosmetic composition of claim 54, wherein said discharging step is performed simultaneously with application of vibrations.

58. (New) The skin cosmetic composition of claim 57, wherein said application of vibrations is performed by a member selected from the group consisting of applying vibration to said orifice, applying vibration directly to said emulsion or dispersion, and applying vibration to a liquid column discharged from said orifice.

59. (New) The skin cosmetic composition of claim 57, wherein said vibrations are at a frequency of from 1 to 2000 Hz.

60. (New) The skin cosmetic composition of claim 54, wherein said orifice has a diameter of from 0.1 to 5 mm.

61. (New) The skin cosmetic composition of claim 54, wherein said emulsion or dispersion is at a temperature above the gelation temperature prior to discharging through said orifice and is cooled to below said gelation temperature thereafter.

62. (New) The skin cosmetic composition of claim 52, wherein said particles have a shape having rotation symmetry.

63. (New) The skin cosmetic composition of claim 62, wherein said particles are spherical.

64. (New) The skin cosmetic composition of claim 54, wherein said emulsion or dispersion further comprises an emulsifying agent or a dispersing agent.

65. (New) The skin cosmetic composition of claim 52, wherein the non-crosslinked hydrogel is made of agar or gelatin.

66. (New) The skin cosmetic composition of claim 64, wherein the emulsifying agent or dispersing agent comprises a polymer emulsifying or dispersing agent.

67. (New) The skin cosmetic composition of claim 52, wherein the oil component comprises a solid fat, and the melting point of the oil component is not less than 35° C.

68. (New) The skin cosmetic composition of claim 52, wherein the oil component comprises a solid ceramide or an analog thereof.

69. (New) The skin cosmetic composition of claim 52, wherein not less than 80% by weight of the hydrogel particles have a ratio of a longest diameter to a shortest diameter (longest diameter/shortest diameter) of not more than 1.7.

70. (New) The skin cosmetic composition of claim 52, wherein the hydrogel particle has a breaking intensity of 2 to 40kPa and a Young's modulus of 10 to 150 kPa.

71. (New) The skin cosmetic composition of claim 52, wherein the non-crosslinked hydrogel is made of agar having a gel strength of not more than 68.6 kPa.

72. (New) The skin cosmetic composition of claim 52, wherein the skin cosmetic composition is a lotion.

73. (New) The skin cosmetic composition of claim 52, wherein the hydrogel particles are stably dispersed and suspended in said aqueous medium.